1: Gutierrez de Pineda--167 E-5 (1947) 1950 SC13 Goajiro SC13

VII

THE CACIQUE

614 622 Authority in La Guajira is not concentrated but is distributed among each of the clan groups into which society is divided. It is practically a hierarchy, whose primary nucleus is the small family, after which follows the extended family, which includes uncles and aunts /Spanish tíos/, cousins, nephews and nieces /Spanish sobrinos/ on the maternal side, and, finally, the clan, into which are collected all individuals bearing the same surname and possessing the same symbol animal. It can therefore be said that in La Guajira there is no authority which imposes its will on the collectivity. There are, however, mestizo individuals who, owing to their economic position and social status, have acquired a measure of authority over their Guajiro relatives and over other local groups, an authority that is exercised although not legally recognized. Because of their outstanding economic position these mestizos keep on subordinating a series of people around them: their servants with their families, their many wives and children and the families of these latter who depend directly upon them; with the economic subordination comes submission of will. The authority of these mestizos is increased furthermore because of the influence they have with civilizado /nonnative/ groups because of their personal dealings with them, and their facility in mediating facing the civilizados gives them a superior position within the collectivity. To this class of individuals the name "cacique" is given, even by the Indians themselves, but they are not caciques in the true sense of the word.

622 In La Guajira there is another institution which is also called caciquism, which we will continue to describe briefly below.

The necessary conditions for being a cacique in the Guajiro sense and the attributes and responsibilities of the position are the following.

/135 cont./

622 1. The cacique's maternal family must be strong in masculine elements who are ready to back up his decisions and enforce compliance to his will.

2. He must be a Guajiro and of high social standing. /136/

3. He as well as his relatives must be rich, possessing goods, represented above all by animals, which is what gives most prestige in the eyes of the other natives.

622 4. He must tener palabra /literally, "have word"/, that is
537 to say, he must have oratorical talents (Cf. Valuation of the Woman, in chapter on Premarital Considerations; and Compensation payment for death, in chapter on Law), because from this skill he derives one of his principal attributes: acting as intermediary in the putchis, or wars between clans, and in all quarrels between groups and individuals. Tener palabra is the primary and basic talent for the acquisition of prestige as a cacique, for on this gift of oratory, on the practical knowledge of native psychology and of traditional law which guides him in his decisions, depends the success of his arbitrations.

622 The opinions of the cacique, mediator, or orator /Spanish palabra, lit. "word"/ -- all of which titles he has -- are respected; *his counsel is asked for, his help is solicited in time of need, his* opinion is consulted in the varying circumstances of the life of his kin and of others who know him. His accurate deductions and prudence keep strengthening his power until he becomes the headman of a district, which sees in him its representative and lawyer in all its problems and expects from him in exchange for the submission made to him, that he be capable of winning every time and easily dominating every abnormal situation that might arise.

In every family group one of these caciques will be found in power and one or more others capable of succeeding him, but circumstances will eliminate competitors until only one remains.

The authority of a headman is recognized primarily by his extended family group, but outstanding qualities of one of these family heads may cause his influence to be extended to other groups who, by considering him more powerful and influential

/136 cont./

622 than their own head, will solicit his intervention in special problems, especially when these refer to personal differences with groups stronger than themselves. This attitude is taken with the approval of the other cacique, who also on occasion will add his efforts to assist him when he wants to impress his point of view on another very strong clan group.

When a pact in which he has mediated or lent his assistance is not complied with, he must resort to force, if the noncompliance of the opposing party drives him to this extreme, so as not to lose his power and authority, and he has to give examples of great personal courage, exposing himself more than the other who go to back him up, if he does not wish to lose credit in the opinion of his own people as well as of outsiders, but to give the impression of a real headman, successfully directing any warlike actions that may develop. He should let himself be killed before yielding in his task, /137/ and fight on until he has made the enemy comply with the pact made and agree to the recognition of his authority and to complete submission. In this fighting all his relatives in the maternal line join up with him, but not his [573] own sons, because, as we know, these do not form part of his family and if they were wounded their maternal relatives would present a claim for compensation payment against the father, and thus the number of his enemies would be increased. However, at the present time, through the influence of the civilizados, the son is following and backing up his father in spite of Guajiro law.

Another of the functions of the cacique is to counsel his people and those who recognize his authority and who seek his opinion in any of their problems. In these cases his advice is to be prudent. He exhorts them to comply with the law; he obliges the thief to return the stolen goods, and he reprimands him for his felonious action; he tries to arrange that those in enmity over the spilling of blood arrive at an equitable settlement to avoid later reprisals; he asks the women to be faithful to their husbands; he mediates in conjugal arguments and quarrels, trying to obtain from the men more consideration for their wives.

/137 cont./

622 As he is the recognized family head, his own conduct should be strictly in accordance with Guajiro laws, although this does not imply that he does not try to obtain the maximum advantages, even beyond those stipulated, when he intervenes in his own peoples' affairs.

His own personal superiority obliges him to how his economic strength. In every collection that may be made for the marriage of a relative of his, or for any other kind of payment, he should head the list with a good subscription which should in no case be less than any other contributor's. At wakes he should do likewise, and also, by his authority, oblige all his own people to contribute adequately, as this establishes the good name of the family group which he heads and directs.

He ought to be kindly, amiable, and cordia with all, listen to all complaints calmly and patiently, be ready to help everyone; he should keep his house open to everyone, for his hospitality must be the most ample and welcoming.

The office of the cacique is transmitted in two ways: It is inherited, in which case it passes to a nephew, the son of a sister; and it is acquired by virtue of personal and family merit: high social and economic position, facility in oratory, knowledge of native psychology, a suave but energetic character, power of conviction, friendliness, and diplomatic talents. /139/

VIII

SLAVERY AND BOND SERVICE

567 Causes of slavery. Slavery is always an outcome of the violation of the regimen for social stability in the community; this means that if an offense is committed against a member of one of the consanguineous groups (totemic clans) existing in La Guajira,

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
SC13 Goajiro SC13

133 venting anything being landed dry. The Colombian Government
504 erected a guard-house at the entrance of this bay last year, but I am afraid it will have to be abandoned as untenable. Puerto Estrella makes a very bad port, the small trading schooners having to lie in under the breakers. This is the last recognised Colombian port, at least pending the arbitration question. The next good port is the Laguna de Tucacas, in the Gulf of Maracaybo. This place is much frequented by Venezuelans, and a trade has sprung up that if not checked will ruin the already drooping commerce of Rio Hacha. The last port on the coast is that of Cujoro, and spoken of as the future port of Maracaybo, with which it would have to be connected by rail, an engineering feat of not much difficulty. The *ensenada* or bay of Calabozo has an inaccessible, heavy, surf-beaten coast.

614 The peninsula is inhabited by only one tribe of Indians. These are subdivided into many families or castes, bearing much analogy to the ancient "clans" of Scotland. Each caste or rather family circle is united against all comers, taking up the quarrel of any one of its members to make it general. The Goajiros are strictly conservative and aristocratic
556 in their ideas, wealth and interest are omnipotent. A poor man may be
[578] insulted with impunity, when the same to a rich man would cause certain bloodshed. They have no veritable rulers, but each community
● [622] recognises the wealthiest of its members as the chief or corporal, as he has been dubbed by the Spaniards, and look to him for protection. An Indian born poor, cannot become wealthy and great. Whatever herds he may accumulate, his humble origin would never be forgotten; he
[557] could, however, marry into a high caste family, having the means, and his children could become, through their mother's relations, great chiefs.
614 Besides the name, each caste or family represents some animal, and many of the minor castes, over and above their own symbol, adopt another of some more powerful denomination, to enjoy the privilege of a good protector. There are at present, altogether, some thirty odd castes among the Goajiros. Of these I was able to discover the names of twenty-two. The remainder are insignificant, little known castes, chiefly inhabiting the hills. There are about ten of importance, chief among these the "Urianas." This, the largest caste in the Goajira, has subdivided or split up into many ramifications, such as Uriana tiger, Uriana rabbit, Uriana paularate (a song bird), Uriana gecko (lizard). This family is at present not only by far the most numerous, but also the richest; due to its connections by marriage with the Pushainas, formerly the wealthiest of the land. The Pushainas are to-day still
[558] great holders of tumas and ornaments, but with the Indian, only cattle, mules, and horses are real estate. The Urianas on receiving the tumas, sold out for cattle. The second in numbers are the Epieyuas, as a rule they are poor. Under their protection are the Sevanas, again under these the small caste of the Guergueriyuas. A full list will be given

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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those we had left, but just as simple. Inside were hammocks slung this way and that. Along the walls were carrying-nets filled with things, and earthenware vessels lay scattered about the floor of hard-trodden sand. Some of these vessels were grey, others reddish-brown, some had necks and handles. One was an obvious imitation of a Dutch liqueur jar. It was not far to Puerto Estrella, to which schooners from the Dutch islands came.

Most of the earthenware vessels had red decoration. Some, with wavering lines, were obviously the work of the oldest of the women, who was frail and almost blind; but there was no fault in the shape of the vessel. The woven cloths were hung up in a special shelter. The warp hung vertical and ran like an endless belt over an upper and a lower pole. Several related tribes, members of the Aruak family, use the same method. When the cloth is finished, it forms a ring, and is then cut up.

They were working on a man's belt or sash. The everyday belt was only a couple of inches wide, but sashes intended for more solemn occasions were some eighteen inches broad and very colourful. They used red, yellow, black and white yarn and the pattern was most interesting. Ceremonial cloaks are also woven for the men, just as colourful as the sashes, but, to my sorrow, I was never able to acquire a really fine specimen. They were simply too expensive. The rich chiefs collected them, but custom decreed that they must be wrapped in all their cloaks when they died, which meant that none were inherited. The men's everyday cloaks I have already described; they pulled them on and then twisted them so that their chest was bared. The women's dress was considerably more Spartan: it was a wide tunic, made like a sack with holes for the head and arms, and dyed black with divi-divi or brown with stuff from some other plant. Their loin-cloth only became visible when they were working in the shade or indoors and removed their tunics. It too was black or undyed. They themselves thought that there was no call to use a nice patterned cloth for underclothes. Little girls often had patterned loin-cloths, but then they did not wear tunics

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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CHAPTER 7

Laws with No Tablets

As we were riding through a parched and savage landscape we saw at a distance a number of mounted warriors divided into two groups, which were drawn up in semi-circles facing each other. We thought there must be some ceremony in progress and wanted to ride across. They were all magnificently got up and armed to the teeth with bows, arrows and guns. Our Indian guide stopped us.

'Be careful! Be careful! That is a *purchi!*'

We knew what that meant. A dispute had arisen between two clans, through someone having been offended, robbed or perhaps killed. The victim's family had asked for help and the matter was now to be settled at a meeting with the offender's clan. Damages would be demanded and paid, or there would be a fight—the start of a blood-feud. One should be careful not to get involved in that sort of thing.

These Indians have no police, no authority that dispenses justice; they have to judge and settle matters themselves with the help of their families, yet in accordance with their laws. These are curious, detailed and logical. They are, of course, unwritten, mere customary rights, but they are strictly observed and applied with the utmost consistence. Before we crossed into Indian territory, the Creoles had urged us to make ourselves acquainted with the Indians' laws, as otherwise we could get into trouble quite unwittingly.

Soon after seeing the purchi we met the region's most powerful chief, Manana. We were on our way to a small rancho, when we caught sight of some Indians working on a cactus fence. We wanted to film them, and had just got

7:Bollinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

our cameras up, when a plump, middle-aged Indian came rushing up and began giving the fencers orders in a stern voice. He had not noticed us.

'That's Mauana,' Francisco whispered respectfully.

Mauana was wearing only a guayuco and brow-band, which is the genuine Guajiro garb. When he saw us, he at once spoke to us in good Spanish, which not all the chiefs know, for the Guajiro cling stubbornly to their own tongue. Mauana, of course, had heard of us. He now invited us to go with him and see how he lived.

First, we came to his plantations, which many in the peninsula must have envied him. There was a green valley, one of the oases in the semi-desert, where manioc, sugar-cane and maize grew, shaded by coconut palms, mango trees and bananas. The plots were watered by narrow canals which all came from the one stream in Guajira that never ran dry.

Mauana was obviously a strict master and he ordered his slaves about like a sergeant-major, but his plantations was a model one and he was an efficient chief who maintained order in a most commendable way. Once or twice he had caught white criminals who had hidden in the hills there and sent them back to the authorities—to their great disappointment. He lived simply, as all Guajiro do, but he had an unusually well-built house that was completely roofed.

We told Mauana of the purchi we had seen, and he used this as an excuse to give us a lesson in Indian law. Such an account of the Indians' social order and laws was both amusing and interesting, and it showed how different from ours the primitive's conception of justice can be. One knows all too well what mistakes colonial authorities have made through misunderstanding the native conception of these matters, especially of the rights of ownership.

The Indians, as has already been said, are divided into clans in which relationship follows the female line. Children thus take their mothers' names. Their fathers belong to a different clan and strictly speaking are not related to them. It is their eldest maternal uncle who is their head and guardian, and it is from him, not from their father, that they

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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55] 63 idea being that to speak the name renews the grief of the dead person's relatives. An old man of the Uriana clan, who called himself Juan, died. Some time later some of his relatives were at an entertainment, at which too was a woman of the Jusuí clan with her little son. A Creole asked this woman what her little boy was called and without thinking, she replied: 'Juan'. The dead man's relatives then claimed damages because she had mentioned the dead man's name, and she had to pay them a bullock, even though it was a Spanish name. It was the reminder of their grief that had [64] to be compensated. It is also an offence to tread on an Indian's grave.

63 It is more expensive to strike a person than to insult him. One should not answer an insult with a blow, but a well-to-do Indian will not infrequently do so and gladly pay the damages. If an Indian strikes another without hurting him, he must pay nonetheless, because he has treated the other as a slave—it being only one's own slaves that one has the right to strike. If anyone tears a tunic, he must not only 66 *replace it, but pay for* the shame the other still as going about in rags.

A thief, if caught, must repay several times the value of what he has stolen. Not infrequently he must pay with his life, especially if the person he has robbed is a powerful personage, as he usually is, and the thief belongs to a weak clan that cannot help his family to exact blood-money.

[67] A thief can be forced to pay by working for his victim. He 69 becomes a debtor-slave. Murder, manslaughter and being the cause of another's death are the most serious crimes. They do not have these sexual categories. The penalty for manslaughter is very heavy. If agreement cannot be reached on it, it can sometimes lead to war, a war in which the enemy must either be exterminated or enslaved.

70 It is on such occasions that a powwow is held, at which you can see the groups of warriors drawn up facing each other, while a chief presides.

70 The chief is a mighty person and will have been chosen 71 for his excellent qualities, not he is not a judge, but rather adviser and mediator. His rule is so considerable. He will

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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already have talked with both parties and know their points of view. One can imagine what takes place. The killer's family wishing an amicable settlement: 'It is best that we do not begin a war, brothers,' says their leader. He offers reasonable compensation, paints a picture of the horrors of war, the continual fear of attack, the burning houses, the women violated and enslaved, the blood-feud continuing from generation to generation, and, by way of contrast, describes the calm of peaceful work.

The other side are spoiling for a fight. 'I am rich and need no damages. My men are brave and prepared for a fight. I wish that we measure our strength.'

If a settlement is not arrived at, a fresh meeting is arranged, and meanwhile there is a state of latent war. Even if a fine is agreed upon, peace is not restored until the fine has actually been paid. This is probably done in stages, and that is why the Creoles say that the Indians can kill each other on the instalment system.

To bring about another's death, whether intentionally or unintentionally, has grave consequences for the person responsible. The fine that has to be paid is often ruinous. The homicide becomes indebted to his relatives who have to help him pay. Also, for magical reasons, he has to submit to a lengthy period of isolation and to certain restrictions which prevent him attending to his affairs and make him endure certain privations.

If a white man has killed an Indian, he should try to get to safety outside the peninsula, because even if he pays a fine for manslaughter, the Indians will seek his life. Three white men must die for each Indian killed, according to the old rule. They long insisted on regarding all white people as being of the one clan, though nowadays they know that they are split up into different peoples. They would now never dare extend vengeance for an injury inflicted by a native mulatto to, say, a fair-haired foreigner from the north.

The foregoing are but a few points of Guajiro law which is really much more complicated than these would make it appear. The law ought really to be the same for all, but

71Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

CHAPTER 8

Innocence and the Fertility Dance

MAUANA invited us to visit him again, and we were glad to do so. We liked him and his oasis. Also he taught us a lot, for he was knowledgeable and intelligent, a proper chief who was not called *cacique* just out of politeness, as is the case with many rich mestizos near the border.

The Indians expect a great deal of their chief. He has to be an adroit negotiator, able to uphold the clan's rights and support its members. In war he is the leader who must be in the van and never yield. He must be ever hospitable, a good speaker and in every way a worthy representative. Mauana seemed to be such a chief.

Our only means of repaying his hospitality was to give a great porridge feast—we had a lot of oatmeal with us. The Indians loved our porridge, perhaps because it was reminiscent of their own maize gruel, which we ourselves far preferred. This feast took place on Mauana's next visit to Nazaret, and after it he was eager for us to pay him another visit, promising to show us dancing.

On our arrival we were introduced to the 'princess', his unmarried daughter. Mauana wanted us to photograph her. She was not pretty, but typically Indian in appearance. She had to put on all her finery and her paint, and her mule was saddled and decked out as for a ceremonial occasion. She had gold and coral at her neck, ankles and wrists, and large spiral patterns painted on her cheeks. Her mule had three tails: its own and two artificial ones, such being the fashion then. The girl was no film star: she was as stiff as a ram-rod and not to be thawed. Luckily, her skin looked light on the photograph, as every Guajiro girl desires it to be. Mauana

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

would not have been pleased if we had not managed to get her looking nice and pale. In reality her complexion was perhaps a shade too dark. Mauana asked if everyone in our country was as fair-skinned as my wife, and when I assured him that they were, he wondered whether he should not send his daughter to Sweden for a time to let her become lighter. The girl did not appear to be so very young. Francisco told us that Mauana was not finding it easy to marry her off. Being the greatest and richest chief in the Macuira Hills, with plantations that were always watered, the price he must ask for her was considerable by Indian standards, and though there had been no lack of inquiries, no deal had yet been made. All this according to Francisco. The price could not be lowered. The girl's uncle insisted on that, as she did too. Every Indian girl is proud of commanding a high price. That not only shows that she is of good family, but also that her mother and grandmother cost a lot too, in other words that she is of an old, propertied family.

'You often hear people say,' Francisco added, 'that it is better to pay little for a wife from a poor family who has been taught to work well, than to give much for a rich girl who only wants to be waited upon. But the fact is that the rich girl's family will provide her with what she might need to live according to her status even after she has married. She will still be supported from home. That, of course, lightens the husband's duties: so it isn't so silly to marry a rich wife,' and he sighed heavily.

Mauana then joined us and he too began discussing marriage. We had heard a certain amount on this subject already, but listened nonetheless attentively. A suitor does not go in person to ask for a girl's hand; he sends a proxy, his eldest maternal uncle or, if possible, a chief on his mother's side. His mother usually goes as well. Sometimes a whole deputation arrives, to be given a ceremonial reception.

The delegates bring with them gifts in the form of necklaces of gold beads and tuma stones. A man like Mauana could expect several of these. If the gifts are accepted, as almost always they are, they at once start discussing the

Uriana are connected by marriage with the Pushaina, another wealthy "tribe" of the *Goajiro*.

Each extended village (section or ranchería) consists of related sib members who are bound by close ties and who unite against outsiders if one of them is wronged. Intermarriage among the sibs is common.

The role of the maternal uncle in *Goajiro* culture is of great importance. Santa Cruz's detailed study of it (1941) will be summarized here. Types of behavior, both prescribed and unformalized, vary, not only according to the seniority of either uncle or nephew but also according to that of the nieces. The maternal uncle must leave all his property to his oldest sister's oldest son, the other nephews receiving nothing. In practice the maternal uncle transfers most of his property to his own children, and after his death little if anything remains for the nephew. The attitude of a senior nephew toward his senior maternal uncle largely depends on what inheritance he expects from him. If the nephew marries a girl from a wealthy family and has, therefore, to pay a high bride price, the senior maternal uncle is expected to make a donation to meet the price. The uncle has no authority, however, in the selection of the bride.

Etiquette requires that in company the nephew must always remain silent if his senior maternal uncle is speaking; if the nephew wishes to speak he must first ask his uncle's permission. The nephew must always show respect and conduct himself with propriety. On the other hand, a senior uncle should not criticize or laugh at his senior nephew. No such behavior is prescribed between father and son or between other uncles and nephews. Public opinion castigates any deviation from this behavior between uncle and nephew.

The relationship between a maternal uncle and his niece is just the reverse of this, for the uncle is the recipient of benefits. He receives the bride price paid for the niece, and he contributes nothing toward the dowry for the bridegroom. The maternal uncle, however, is empowered to accept or reject a prospective bridegroom, and the girl has no recourse in the matter. A girl is respectful and considerate, although less rigidly formal, toward her senior maternal uncle. Her behavior toward her other uncles depends solely on her regard for them.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

There is no central government uniting all the sibs, but each sib or subdivision thereof has its chiefs who inherit their position matrilineally. The oldest chief has greatest authority and may carry a knobbed stick as symbol of his authority. He is generally the wealthiest and has most retainers. Hereditary status is very important, and a man born poor may never achieve a high position, even though he acquires much wealth. He may, however, marry a woman of high rank and his children will inherit her rank. Chiefs are polygynous and have many daughters, for

622 Chiefs are polygynous and have many daughters, for
595 whom very high bride prices are paid—sometimes thousands of animals,
583 worth $6,000 to $10,000. Such rich chiefs take great pride in their
556 daughters, dressing them in fine silken robes and necklaces of gold and pearls and providing them with personal servants.

567 There is a class of slaves who are beneath the chiefs' retainers in the social hierarchy. It consists of people born into this status and of captives.

PROPERTY

622 All cattle, though individually owned, belong in theory to the local group as a whole and are worked for the common benefit of all. For example, the cattle paid as a bride price when a girl marries within her own sib go to a new owner, but the milk, butter, cheese, and hides from them continue to be shared by everyone in the sib. When a woman receives cattle as a bride price for her daughter any new stock born to them belongs to the daughter's husband and his sons, and when the animals are rounded up for the annual branding each son is allowed to brand a certain number of them.

ETIQUETTE

576 The *Goajiro* are in general unfriendly to strangers but have a well-
577 established code of hospitality. Strangers calling at a house must wait until invited in. Inside a house a bowl of chicha or rum (coffee when available) is the first gift offered the visitor, who is thereafter given a hammock and treated as a member of the family. A special feast may
545 be arranged if there are many guests. A guest of high rank is feasted, and some of the young girls of the house may be placed at his disposal.

LAW AND ORDER

627 The chiefs have little power outside their own local group, where they settle minor disputes. The solution of many disputes and transgressions of custom are left to the parties concerned. The laws of group respon-
628 sibility and group retaliation lead to frequent intertribal feuds. A person
614 without a strong sib to protect him is helpless, for others may use any act which may conceivably be interpreted as harmful as pretext for demanding indemnity. For example, a person injured while intoxicated may demand payment from the person who sold him the rum, or a person injured by a borrowed animal may demand payment from the owner of the animal; a thief who hurts himself when trespassing on the property of his intended victim will demand compensation of him; and anyone aiding a sick or wounded person who subsequently dies incurs a liability.

672 If a person injures himself he must make an expiatory gift to the members of his own sib and a lesser gift to his father's relatives. If a child dies when under the care of one parent, this parent must reimburse

8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
SC13 Goajiro SC13

minus an amount considered equivalent for the sexual right he had exercised. If a woman dies in her first childbirth the husband may demand the full return of the bride price (Simons, 1885, p. 792, however, states that the wife's relatives demand compensation from the husband). Adultery entails divorce with full return of the bride price. It rarely occurs, however, as the wife will be treated badly by her own relatives. At his death a man's wives are inherited by his brother, and next by his sister's sons; the women may avoid this by making a payment equivalent to their bride price. If he is of the Catholic faith his children may claim to be his legal heirs, which leads to conflict with the maternal nephews. (See Social Organization, p. 374.)

The influence of women in political affairs is sometimes noticeable. There are cases of female chiefs, and women are respected enough so as to be able to intervene and stop brawls.

Death.—Funerals are accompanied by festivities which last days or even weeks, according to the wealth of the family. There are some differences in the funeral ceremonies which are apparently associated with the particular alijas. These funeral feasts afford the best opportunity for display of wealth, and more than 1,000 head of livestock may be butchered. Every mourner who comes to the feast contributes animals for slaughter and continues to do so as long as he cares to remain. After the mourning period, marked by weeping and lamenting interspersed with drinking and feasting, the corpse, which has lain in a hammock slung from the rafters, is sewn up in hides by the women (men may not touch a dead body) and carried to the cemetery of the tribe. For a year or so, the body may be temporarily consigned to a shallow grave marked by a pile of stones. Food and drink are often placed in the grave, and, if the deceased had been a warrior, his bows and arrows are put in. A year or two later the bones are exhumed and reburied in a large urn. The exhumation is generally done at night and is accompanied by a feast. The remains are carried in a funeral procession to the dead person's birthplace, where they are buried in the family's own cemetery. The funeral urn is placed in a vertical position with the narrow neck of the jar protruding above ground to permit the free entry and exit of the spirit and to allow the remains of other members of the family to be added from time to time. A cactus hedge surrounds the cemetery, and in wet weather half a calabash is placed over the opening of each jar to keep out the rain. Whenever two relatives of a recently deceased person meet, they bow to the ground, shouting and groaning, for several minutes. (For a slightly different account of the burial of a rich man, see Simons, 1885, p. 792.)

If a person is stricken with smallpox the whole tribe moves away, only the family of the sick person remaining. When the death occurs they bury the body below the floor and burn the hut over the grave.

9: Santa Cruz E-5 (1958) 1960
SC13 Goajiro SC13

The whole judiciary structure with its elaborate system of torts is based on the payment of a given number of domestic animals. There is no crime, including murder, that cannot be amiably settled by such payments (Petrullo, 1937). The acquisition of a bride is also reduced to the payment of a stipulated price, in terms of domestic animals, to be given to the maternal uncle of the girl.

Social, economic, and political status in the Guajiro society is intimately connected with the cattle complex. To have a high status an individual needs, primarily, two assets: he must possess a large number of domestic animals, in other words, he must be considered rich; and he must be an older man. If he lacks either of these requisites, he is not a leader, as he will not be sufficiently respected nor will members of his clan come to him to seek his advice. Consequently, leaders are not numerous in the Guajiro peninsula. The present writer knows only two individuals, both in Venezuela, who are today the unquestionable leaders of their respective clans. These men are Panchito Silva, of the Pushaina clan, and José de la Rosa Fernandez of the Uriana clan.

An analysis of the lives of these two men will be illustrative of the traditional methods of acquiring status among the Guajiro.

Panchito Silva, a man of about 80 years of age, lives in the native village of Sishipes in Venezuela. During his life-time he has had eight wives (two or three at a time) and now lives with his surviving two, one about 35 years old and the other about 50. He is a full-blooded Indian as has been the case of his wives. There is no trace of race mixture in his family. He has no clear idea of how many children he has had, apart from those living with him now (two men and five women). Yet he knows definitely that he has four younger brothers—who will inherit his wealth and position before these are passed on to his nephews—three sisters and twenty-five nephews and nieces (all sons and daughters of his sisters). His lack of concern towards his own children coupled with his keen interest in his nephews and nieces seems to be a clear indication of how strong the avunculate is in traditional Guajiro society. His holdings in cattle and other domestic animals are very large. Roughly he owns around 1,000 head of cattle and about 3,000 of sheep,

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goats, mules, asses, and horses. Approximately 60% of this total he acquired through inheritance, as his maternal uncle was a wealthy man and, in his time, the leader of the Pushaina clan. The rest of his property, Panchito has acquired through the payment of bride-prices received for his nieces. Unquestionably, Panchito Silva has become wealthy and the leader of his clan through inheritance, although, through the years, as he has aged and his nieces have married he has become more firmly established in his position.

Members of the Pushaina clan come to Panchito from the most remote places of the peninsula (both from Colombia and Venezuela), to seek his advice; to ask him to settle disputes among families within the clan; to tell him about injuries received by a clan member so he can establish the amount of compensation to be paid and exact payment from the offending clan; to fix the bride-price of a given girl member of the clan; to establish how much each male member must contribute in order to pay compensation due to another clan; and for many other minor details of clan organization and function. The writer was a guest at Panchito's home for two days and, during that period, Panchito received the visit of no less than 63 clan members, who, in all, brought about 25 or 30 different clan problems to be settled.

The story of José de la Rosa Fernandez, although different from that of Panchito Silva, represents a second method of acquiring status following the traditional law of the tribe. José de la Rosa Fernandez is also a full-blooded Indian, about 65 years old. He has had seven wives, but always one at the time, except now when he has two. One of them is an old woman with whom he lives most of the time, and just recently he married a very young girl (who remains living with her mother) whom he visits once or twice a week. Fernandez's position in the Uriana clan is very similar to that of Silva in the Pushaina. The writer was not able to hold private conversations with Fernandez and, consequently, exact data regarding his property are lacking. Although he did not inherit too much property nor the clan leadership as in Silva's case, he was fortunate to have many nieces whom he has managed to marry off very well and to get large bride-prices for them. Thus he began to accumulate property and at present he is probably the richest man in the

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Venezuelan Guajiro. As his wealth grew so did his prestige. About twenty years ago the then leader of the Uriana clan died leaving no heirs, as he had no brothers and no direct nephews. Guajiro tradition establishes that, if upon the death of a clan leader and wealthy man there are no close heirs, even though there be distant ones, a council of elders (informally chosen among the oldest and more respected men of the clan) will meet and select the individual who shall take over not only the leadership of the clan but the wealth of the deceased as well. These cases are very infrequent (actually the writer could only find, in the memory of the oldest men, two instances of a council of elders meeting to select a leader; one is the case mentioned in this article, and the other occurred among the Epieyú clan, in Colombia, about fifty or sixty years ago). Fernandez now confesses, quite candidly, that at the time of the meeting of the council of elders, he distributed a number of gifts among them, thus succeeding in having them select him as clan leader and heir to the wealth of the dead chief.

It is interesting to note—and it shows how much acculturation Guajiro culture has undergone with the assimilation of the cattle complex—that the true Guajiro term for leader or chief (which also means "old man") *alat'laa* is almost all but forgotten and practically never used, having been substituted by the word *to'olo* a corruption of the Spanish word *toro* meaning BULL. (Stops are not glottal, but simple stoppage of the sound to be renewed with the coming vowel. Phonetic transcription have followed those given by Dr. Martha Hilderbrand's work on the Guajiro language published by the Comisión Indigenista, Venezuela, in 1958).

The role of Fernandez as leader of the Uriana clan is an exact replica of Silva's. He acts as advisor, settles disputes, makes arrangements for the payments of torta, bride-prices, etc. His day is fully as busy as that of Silva and he attends to all these matters besides his personal affairs.

Here we have, then, the two traditional ways of acquiring status in Guajiro society that the present writer has been able to investigate; one through inheritance, as in the case of Panchito Silva; and the other, through selection by a council of elders, as in the case of José de la Rosa Fernandez. It is doubtful that

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there may be other traditional ways of acquiring status. The literature mentions none, although Ernst (1887), Jahn (1927), and Hernandez de Alba (1936) make detailed comments on the two traditional ways described here.

Incidentally, these two leaders are never called by their first names, not even by their closest relatives, and are referred to as To'olito Silva and To'olito Fernandez.

To illustrate the new way of acquiring status in Guajiro society it is best to describe quite fully how one individual, and as far as the writer knows, the only one, whom we shall name José Perez, has reached a certain status though employing none of the traditional methods. As guide and interpreter of the present writer during the recent field trip, José Perez was in constant personal contact with the author, who was able to obtain valuable first hand information and observe reactions to personal and intimate questions.

First let us give a brief biographical sketch of José Perez. Perez is now 46 years old. He was born in the village of Castilletes, Venezuela, in the extreme north-eastern part of the Guajira peninsula. His father (still living, now in the town of Paraguaipoa, Venezuela) has no trace of Indian blood and is considered in Paraguaipoa as pure white, while his mother (deceased) was a pure Indian belonging to the Uriana Clan. Perez's father took him, while still a child, to Maracaibo for schooling which included three years of high school. At that time Perez's father was quite influential in local politics in Maracaibo and was able to get the Governor of the State of Zulia interested in the youth. Perez was given a small position in the State's government, where he was employed for about ten years. During this period he married a local white girl with whom he had a child (now in his fifth year of medical college, State University of Zulia) and apparently had all but forgotten the Indian half of his heritage settling into the whites' ways of life.

Perez went into politics and was elected Prefect (an office similar to the County Sheriff in the United States) of the Paez district, Sinamaica, in the threshold of the Guajira, so to speak. He moved north to his district leaving his family in Maracaibo. This return to a semi-Indian district apparently had some influence in Perez's outlook for the future, for as soon as his term of

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two days' visit at the home of Panchito Silva and while returning to Paraguaipoa, asked Perez how many wives he had had. Perez was obviously quite upset by the question, but did not hesitate in answering: "Oh, no, Mr. Santa Cruz! I have and only have had one wife, Anita!" (Anita is his Indian wife). Whether the motives for the denial are of a personal nature or involve some cultural complex is unknown to the writer.

Nevertheless Perez leads a perfectly discernable dual life. He has two homes, as described, dividing his time between them, devoting about 40% of the time (when he is not working) to his Maracaibo home, and about 60% to his Guajira home. He has two sets of friends which he is very careful not to mix. His plans for the future of his son are entirely along white cultural lines. At this point we find contradictory thoughts in Perez's mind. The present writer has heard him repeatedly criticize the attitude of certain Guajiros, both full-blooded and half-breeds, who, having gone to Maracaibo for formal education (especially to Teachers' College) have then sought, and in many cases obtained, positions in Maracaibo instead of returning to the Guajira to practice their professions. Yet when it comes to his own son, Perez's plans are for a permanent residence in Maracaibo or, if possible, Caracas, where he could go into practice in an entirely white cultural background.

The problem now is to define Perez's status in the Guajira. Undoubtedly his personality has some importance in Guajiro social stratification, especially among his own generation. This importance he has attained by granting favors, which his semi-official government positions enables him to do, to those whom he thinks will, in the future, be of help to him. Perhaps this is best illustrated by an example. The Ministry of Justice, through the Comisión Indigenista, grants ten scholarships annually to Guajiros who meet certain educational requirements. These scholarships are for the State of Zulia Teachers' College in Maracaibo. Perez has been given, more or less, a free hand in the selection of the candidates for these scholarships. About 65% of the candidates chosen by Perez, in the four years that the plan has been in operation, have been admitted to the College. The writer was able to look briefly into the family back-

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ground of the candidates selected by Perez so far, and he has found that only one among all the boys and girls recommended by him actually came from a Guajiro family that could not afford to pay for higher education. All the rest came from families, both pure Indian and with white mixture, belonging to the upper economic and social strata of the Guajiro society, who could easily pay for the education of their children.

These and other favors that Perez has granted to the upper social class have, undoubtedly, given him a unique status in the social structure. Perez is not respected in the same sense as Fernandez and Silva are respected, but his advice is sought and no favor he asks is ever denied. The older men, especially those enjoying certain leadership, look upon Perez with certain scorn as an upstart. For instance, on several occasions, when the present writer with Perez visited his father-in-law, Fernandez, the old leader, in a half-humorous and half-serious way, would repeatedly say: "This is To'lito; I am the To'olo," meaning that Perez was just a "little bull," while he was the big, the important "bull." Nevertheless, regardless of this general attitude of the older men, even they come to him whenever they want some favor from the Government. The writer has never heard Perez deny such requests to individuals of the upper stratum, while on several occasions it was noted that he refused to do anything on behalf of those who are economically and socially below him.

As far as the younger generation is concerned, Perez unquestionably has many friends and individuals who look upon him as the possible means of bettering their position. His bitter enemies are also to be found among the younger generation. These will stop at nothing in the hope of having him completely discredited in general and in particular they aim to have him lose his semi-official position. Just recently, this group went so far as to accuse him of having been a collaborator of the deposed dictatorial regime of Perez Jimenez and an enemy of the democratic government now in power in Venezuela. This landed Perez in jail but, as these accusations could not be substantiated, he was released in 24 hours. This incident is referred to here for the sole purpose of illustrating to what measures his enemies

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will go to have him fall in disgrace. Whether these accusations are true or false is not our concern in this article.

Summing up Perez's position in Guajiro society we find the following facts: Among the older and more influential men, Perez is not considered as one of them and their attitude towards him is not a respectful one. He on the contrary is quite respectful towards them. No one, however, among this group can be classified as his enemy, and they do seek him out for advice in their dealings with Government officials. Among his contemporaries he enjoys a very influential position and practically everyone seeks his friendship. His true friends are to be found, without question, among this group, and, as far as it could be investigated, he has no real enemies among them, although there may be a few who envy his position. The younger generations are clearly divided into two groups—one group which truly respects and looks up to him, and another which is composed of his bitter enemies.

From the many formal and informal conversations the present writer has had with Perez—at his home, while traveling, when visiting some one else, etc.—the following analysis may be made of his behavior and position. While in Maracaibo, Perez soon became aware that he could attain no high status within a white culture where competition is always very keen. As Prefect of Sinamaica he clearly saw the possibilities of climbing up the ladder in Guajiro society and the first step he took towards that goal was to marry a full-blooded Indian girl from an important family, and to marry her in accordance with the traditional Guajiro law. There was very little chance for him to obtain the necessary wealth and to attain leadership status through property, but he saw the opportunity his semi-official position gave him to become the point of contact between the Guajiro and white cultures, cultivating both and becoming an almost indispensable person in the dealings the true natives had with the authorities. Whether his marriage to the Guajiro girl was purely for interest or whether there was any love involved in, of course, very difficult to say. As the writer made his headquarters in Perez's household at the Laguna del Pajaro, during his stay in the Guajira, he was able to observe, at first hand, the relationship between Perez and his native wife. These were always

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C90 557 593 cordial, no fights or even harsh words between them was ever noticed, and when Perez was arrested, as mentioned before, his wife showed great concern and distress and did everything possible to have him released from jail and brought home. Still the question of how much real affection, especially on Perez's part, is involved in this marriage cannot be answered with certainty.

C92 557 As regards the grantings of favors to the Guajiro, it is obvious that he makes a careful selection and never or hardly ever grants them to individuals who could not, in the future, be of some help to him.

Whether or not Perez will attain a position of respect and leadership such as Panchito Silva and José de la Rosa Fernandez enjoy is hard to say, but the writer will try to make an analysis of the situation and draw certain tentative conclusions.

C90 614 There is no doubt that clan leadership with all its privileges and responsibilities is slowly dying out in the Guajira. Among the 25 odd clans existing at present the writer has met only two individuals who have all the earmarks of a true economic, political, and social leader, namely, Panchito Silva and José de la Rosa Fernandez. Informants have told him that there are two others, the heads of the Epinayú and the Epieyú clans living in the upper Guajira and in Colombia respectively. From what information was gathered these two other leaders fit closely to the pattern described for Silva and Fernandez. The remainder of the clans have no true, powerful leaders, although they do have elder members who are more or less respected and consulted in certain clan matters. Around the turn of the century, however, according to the information gathered first hand from old men like Silva and Fernandez, and from the literature, there were at least twenty powerful leaders among the clans.

182 178 [64] Undoubtedly one of the contributing factors to the breakdown of clan leadership has been the great horizontal movement in population among the Guajiro in the last fifty years. Such spread would tend, naturally, to break down the regional characteristics of the clan and ultimately help to bring about a loss of personal contact between a leader and the rest of his clan and hence the loss of control. Whether there are other economic, social, or political factors in operation favoring this breakdown is not fully known. The writer suspects that there may be but this problem would need further intensive investigation. The

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writer hopes in future researches to complete the picture of leadership among the Guajiro and the present breakdown in their social organization.

As mentioned above, traditional form clan leadership is obtained either through inheritance or by selection made by a council of elders. Perez's case is entirely different and he has followed white culture means and ways, more or less, in obtaining leadership in Guajiro society irrespective of clan organization. In other words, he has become, in certain aspects, a leader of the Guajiro as a whole and not of a particular clan. It is to be expected that as more and more Guajiro individuals go to Maracaibo for higher education, these new methods, such as those utilized by Perez, of attaining status will become stronger and will also be a contributing factor in the final breakdown of the traditional clan leadership. Some years must pass, however, to determine conclusively whether this is the path that leadership in the Guajiro will take. At the moment four important clans still have their traditional leaders—the Pushiana, Uriana, Epinayú, and Epieyú—with strong and well defined heirs to their present leaders; and as long as the inheritance lines remain firm, clan leadership among these four clans will cling to the traditional. The rest of the clans, having lost their lines of inheritance and lacking men of strong personality to become their unquestioned leaders, will tend, we predict, to fall in step with new leaders of the Perez type. Such leaders will, undoubtedly, become more numerous as the acculturation processes go forward.

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